

Appendix A

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about, *adv.*, *prep.*, *adj.*, and *int.* DRAFT REVISION Mar. 2009

Brit. /əˈbaʊt/, *U.S.* /əˈbaʊt/ Forms: *α.* OE **onbuton**, OE-ME **anbutan**, OE-ME **onbutan**, IOE **unbuton** (transmission error), IOE-ME **onbuten**, ME **anbowght**, ME **anbowt**, ME **anbuton**, ME **onbute**. *β.* OE **abuta** (*rare*), OE **abutotan** (transmission error), OE **habutan** (*rare*), OE-eME **abutan**, OE-eME **abuton**, OE-ME **abuten**, eME **abeotan**, eME **abotan**, eME **abutæn**, eME **abutenn**, eME **abuttenn**, ME **abhowte**, ME **abhute**, ME **abode**, ME **abohut**, ME **abohutt**, ME **abot**, ME **abote**, ME **aboughte**, ME **abou₃t**, ME **abou₃te**, ME **abou₃ten**, ME **aboughth**, ME **abouten**, ME **abouute**, ME **abowght**, ME **abowgth**, ME **abownten** (perh. transmission error), ME **abowot**, ME **abowt**, ME **abowten**, ME **abowtt**, ME **abowtyn**, ME **abute**, ME **abuuten**, ME **habout**, ME **obout**, ME **oboute**, ME **obowte**, ME **obut**, ME **obute**, ME 16 **abut**, ME-15 **abouet**, ME-15 **abought**, ME-15 **abowte**, ME-17 **aboute**, ME- **about**, 15 **abowth**; *Eng. regional* 18 **abaght** (*north.*), 18 **abeawt** (*north.*), 18- **abaht** (*north.*), 18- **abaout** (*midl.*), 18- **abawt** (*midl.*), 18- **aboot** (*north. and north midl.*), 18- **abootan** (*north.*), 18- **abouten** (*south.*), 19- **abowt** (*north.*); *U.S. regional* 18 **abaout**, 18 **abeout**, 19- **aboot**, 19- **abouten**, 19- **about'n**, 19- **abowoot**, 19- **erbout**; *Sc.* pre-17 **aboute**, pre-17 **abowt**, pre-17 **abowte**, pre-17 **abut**, pre-17 **abute**, pre-17 17- **about**, 18- **aboot**; also *Irish English* 18 **abouten** (*Wexford*), 18- **abut** (*Wexford*), 19- **aboot** (*north.*). [*< ON-* prefix + *BOUT* *adv.*¹ (see discussion at that entry). Compare Old Frisian *abūta* (adverb) outside. Compare *BOUT* *adv.*¹, *BOUT* *prep.*¹ Compare also later *BOUT* *prep.*², *BOUT* *adv.*² See also *THEREABOUT* *adv.* and later *ROUND ABOUT* *adv.* and *prep.*

The *β* forms show the usual reduction of the unaccented prefix *on-* to *a-* (see *A- prefix*³), already attested in Old English by the late 10th cent. (see A. Campbell *Old Eng. Gram.* (1959) §474).

Compare Old English *ymbūtan* and *UMBE* *prep.*

In Old English, the preposition was construed either with the dative or with the accusative.]

A. *adv.***I. Expressing actual or implied motion or direction.****1. In rotation or revolution; round in a circular course. Now *rare* except in**

uninjured human corpses or parts of them lay about in dozens.

III. Expressing approximation. Nearly, approximately, more or less.

8. With numbers, quantities, and measures: approximately.

In this use distinguished from the preposition (sense B. III.) by being able to premodify the subject or object of a clause or the object of a preposition.

OE Anglo-Saxon Chron. (Tiber. B.i) anno 1055, Man sloh ðær mycel wæl - abutan feower hund manna oððe fife. **IOE Anglo-Saxon Chron.** (Laud) (Peterborough interpolation) anno 656, Swa abutan III mile to þrokonholt, & fra þrokonholt riht þurh al ðe fen. **IOE Anglo-Saxon Chron.** (Laud) (Peterborough contin.) anno 1127, Soðfeste men..sæidon, þes þe heom þuhte, þet þær mihte wel ben abuton twenti oðer þritti hornblaweres. **c1225** (?c1200) *St. Juliana* (Bodl.) l. 629 Wenden alle..abute fif hundret. **c1325** (c1300) *Chron. Robert of Gloucester* (Calig. A. 11) 4953 þis was in þe 3er of grace six hundred..& aboute vour & þritti. **c1384 Bible** (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Douce 369(2)) (1850) Deeds v. 36 A noubre of men consentide, aboute foure hundrid. **c1438 Bk. Margery Kempe** II. 234 A woman..abowtyn iij scor 3er of age. **a1470 MALORY Morte Darthur** (Winch. Coll.) 27 Whan they se you but aboute twenty thousande. **1535 Bible** (Coverdale) Josh. iv. C, Aboute a fortye thousande men ready harnessed to the warre, wente before the Lorde. **1555 R. EDEN** tr. Peter Martyr of Angleria *Decades of Newe Worlde* f. 274, [Norway] hath also a peculiar pestilence which they caule Leem or Lemmer..a lyttle foure footed beaste abowte the byggenesse of a ratte with a spotted skynne. **1611 Bible** (A.V.) Exod. xxxii. 28 There fell of the people that day about three thousand men. **a1676 M. HALE Primitive Originat. Mankind** (1677) II. vii. 178 The Period between the Flood and the Exitus of the People out of Egypt was about 800 Years. **1712 E. COOKE Voy. S. Sea** 35 About 30 more had the Scurvy. **1774 J. PRINGLE Disc. Air** 22 An ordinary candle consumes, as it is called, about a gallon of air in a minute. **1793 J. SMEATON Narr. Edystone Lighthouse** (ed. 2) §328 The iron came to about, or rather above, a blue heat. **1801 M. EDGEWORTH Forester in Moral Tales** I. 25 A girl of about seven years old. **1849 MACAULAY Hist. Eng.** I. 348 In 1685 London had been, during about half a century, the most populous capital in Europe. **1879 J. N. LOCKYER Elem. Lessons Astron.** vi. 36. 208 Light travels about 186,000 miles a second. **1915 D. HAIG Diary** 20 Jan. in *War Diaries & Lett. 1914-18* (2005) 93 About 11 officers are now to be added to my Staff. **1942 National Geographic Mag.** June 730/2 It was a four-and-a-half-foot barracuda, motionlessly regarding us from about 15 feet away. **2001 E. SCHLOSSER Fast Food Nation** vii. 150 Each steer deposits about fifty pounds of manure every day.